2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

CHAPTER VII

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

It is the duty of every Rwejli capable of procreation to marry. This duty is laid upon him by his connection with his kinsmen. The more numerous these are, the more power and influence they possess. The individual who refused to defend the rights of his kin would be expelled, and whoever deliberately declined to multiply its defenders would meet the same fate. Without his kin, *ahl*, the Bedouin would be the most wretched of beings.

To marriage the Rwejli is led by mutual inclination or love. A boy of twelve has a liking for a girl of the same age, and it is generally recognized; no one objects. It is said: "Love comes from Allâh, *al-mḥabbe min allâh*." The boy calls on his beloved in her tent, talks with her there, helps with the work, and the parents recollect the time of their first love. An older boy may join his sweetheart where and whenever he wishes to. He helps her water the camels, draw the water, strike and pitch the tent; he attends her on the march, and pays her a visit in the evening. Usually they meet in a tent that is either vacant or little visited. The Šarârât women whose husbands are serving as herdsmen or who are widowed gladly lend their small tents, *ḫarâbîš*, for the lovers' meetings. There in the cold seasons of the year they sit all night by the fire, parting only when the morning star makes its appearance. In the warm season, especially when camping in the Nefûd, the lovers sit down on a sand drift in the shade of a tall *rṯṯa* bush to talk of everything and nothing. Their love they declare to each other in these words:

"Thou art the slumber of mine eyes, *enti nowm 'ajni*; thou art my desire, *ent murâdi*; thou art my food and drink, *enti akli w-širbi*; thou art my creed, *ent dîni*," and so on.

The enamored Rwejli likes to say: "I wish to fast and pray, but only in honor of those with loosened hair; in honor of Allâh's countenance I shall not pray; *ana-ṣûm ṣ-ṣalli lnâ-ḥâṭât al-'ačâriš w-illa lwağh allâh mâni mṣalli*." Or: "I will not

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cannot meet the demand and her kin will not help, the lover can only elope with her. Then they seek refuge either with the Šammar between the middle Euphrates and Tigris, or with the Lhejb in the vicinity of Aleppo, or, perhaps, with the Sirḥân and Beni Ṣaḫr on the southwest border of the Ḥawrân. Once there the lovers care not in the least for either the husband's or the wife's relatives. An elopement carried through successfully dissolves the marriage as completely as a divorce itself.[1] The eloper may now make the woman of his heart his lawful wife but must not return with her to his kin before a reconciliation with her former husband and relatives is effected; otherwise he would expose both himself and her to taunts of every imaginable kind. Therefore he sends to them one messenger after another with entreaties for a reconciliation, which, however, is not easily attained. The former husband is generally obdurate much longer than the woman's kin. These accuse the husband of having himself caused the elopement by his unwillingness to let her go and also because he was unable to guard her better in the first place. They sometimes go even as far as to threaten that they will demand from him compensation for staining their honor, should he not forgive both the lover and the wife with whom he has eloped. For has she not been carried away from them as much as from him? And was he not her proper guardian and protector? The deceived husband must not kill either the eloper or the woman, for then he would furnish a reason for revenge. An elopement of a married woman is brought about by stratagem, not by force, and stratagem is not punishable with death.

If a plain but healthy girl cannot find a husband, it is the duty of her nearest kinsman with whom marriage is permissible to marry her; should he refuse he would be a butt for jokes among all his kin forever. In this manner a girl of al-Witre (or al-Wuṭara), subject to Ebe. Fâ'ûr of the 'Ebede tribe, was married in 1909.

PENALTIES FOR UNCHASTITY

Whoever accuses a female, whether girl or woman, of unchastity and cannot prove it, forfeits his hand; this is cut off by a kinsman of the accused. If he puts himself in good

[1] [Errata: See p. 712, cat. 116 for correction of line 8 on this list.]

539* *Śowl* has much the same meaning as *bel*, camels collectively
and forms no plural. Two slaves (negroes) and the master atten
233 only to the watering, while the herdsman watches the camel

Ḳum ṣubb (sic) *w-eszi-l-ḥâjel*
nâḳt eṣṭâm al-ʿâjel.

Rise, pour in, and water the sterile one,
The she-camel of him who tames the violator.

Ṣubbû-ʿala-l-ʿašâjer Pour in water for the sweetheart
muǧawwezât al-bâjer Wedded to a sluggard,
al-bâjer eben al-bâjer. To a sluggard son of a sluggard

[461 *Bâjer* is the name for a squeamish fellow afraid alike
•581] the sun's heat, the night's chills, or of much exertion, an
therefore one who loves to loiter in the tent most of the tim
No girl would marry such a man voluntarily, but, as by th
law of kinship he can claim his nearest cousin, her paren
must give her to him. Small wonder that, once married, h
wife prefers other men; nor can he even rebuke her for thi
as she would run away and he could never get another wif
[827] Because of the Rwala belief that the son inherits his father
qualities, the father in this verse is no better than the so
and the wife, who has no wish to bear him a son, looks arou
for others; such a wife is a called *ṭamûḥ*.

Jâ rabb jâ mawlâna O Lord! O thou Ruler of ours!
bedder lena bhwâna Help us quickly to what we desi
eszi-l-ʿedâd awḍâna. Fill with water our vessels which
have tired us ou

233 When forty to fifty camels of one herd must be water
461 from a well over thirty meters deep, or from a shallow w
that has caved in and into which the water flows very slow
even the hardiest men become tired partly from the labor
drawing the water and partly from watching the crowdi
camels, who, if very thirsty, press around the well, into whi
they would fall if not driven away constantly by the her
men. One man can hardly keep three thirsty animals fr
breaking away from him and running to the water trou
there to squeeze in among those already drinking. Often th
knock over the watering vessel, tread on each other's fe
bite, and knock about the men who are raising the wat